

# Policy and Processes Shared Between Faculty and Student Life 2021-2022

Last Revised 9/23/2021

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## Student Life

### Dean of Students

The Office of the Dean of Students fosters connections between and celebrates the integration of academic and experiential learning in partnership with students, staff, and faculty, to support students' exploration of, connection to, and creation of their Middlebury experience within our vibrant and aspiring inclusive community.

Vice President of Student Affairs, Smita Ruzicka

Dean of Students, Derek Doucet

Operations Coordinator, Michelle Davis

The VPSA and DOS oversee the offices of the Student Life Deans, Community Standards, Residence Life and Student Activities as well as the Center for Health and Wellness on the Middlebury College Campus.

### Student Life Deans

Student Life Deans provide academic and personal support and enforce College policy. The deans help students reframe challenges as opportunities for growth and play a crucial role in supporting Middlebury's goal of a seamless educational/co-educational environment. All students are connected to a dean upon arrival at Middlebury.

Senior Student Life Dean, Jennifer Guinn Sellers

Student Life Dean, Scott Barnicle

Student Life Dean, Matt Longman

Student Life Dean, Emily Van Mistri

Asst. Director for Student Success, Michelle Audette

Student Life Coordinator, Taunia Cantin

Student Life Coordinator, MariAnn Osborne

### Community Standards

Middlebury strives to respond to alleged violations of its policies with fairness, transparency, and consistency. When allegations arise of serious policy violations that do not involve harassment, sexual misconduct, domestic or dating violence or misconduct, or stalking, they are overseen by the Office of Community Standards.

Assoc. Dean for Community Standards, Brian Lind

Asst. Director for Community Standards, Elaine Orozco Hammond

Community Standards Associate, Francisca Drexel

### Residence Life

Middlebury College believes that a meaningful liberal arts education takes place around the clock—as easily over dinner as in the classroom—and our residential system embodies that culture of living, learning, and growing together, no matter what building a student calls home during their time on campus.

Assoc. Dean of Student Life, AJ Place

Assoc. Director Residential Education, Kristy Carpenter

Asst. Director for Housing Operations, Courtney Savage

Student Life Coordinator, Rebecca Rickert

Residence Director, Holly Ange

Residence Director, Esther Thomas

Residence Director, Kirstin Kelly

Residence Director, Heather Sitkie

Residence Director, Esther Thomas

## **Student Activities**

Student Activities provides experiential programs and consequential leadership roles that empower students to build community and engage positively in the world. Student Activities is committed to helping students connect with one another and to facilitating involvement in a wide variety of activities.

Director of Student Activities, Amanda Reinhardt

Asst. Director of Student Activities for Programs and Events, Valerie Nettleton

Asst. Director of Student Activities for Student Leadership and Development, Erin Morrison

Director of Outdoor Programs and Club Sports, Doug Connelly

Technology Coordinator, Student Activities, Samuel Hurlburt

Office and Budget Manager, Student Activities, Maria Farnsworth

Asst. to the Dean of Students, Erin Goodrich

## **Center for Health and Wellness**

The Center for Health and Wellness provides readily accessible and confidential health care to students within an inclusive, collaborative, and integrated treatment framework.

Executive Director of the Center for Health and Wellness, Barbara McCall

Chief Health Officer, Mark Peluso

Director of Counseling, Alberto Soto

Director of Health Services, Sandy Robinson

- [Health Services](#)
- [Counseling](#)
- [Health and Wellness Education](#)
- [Sports Medicine](#)
- [MiddTelehealth](#)
  - Enrolled students have access to a remote care option called MiddTelehealth. It provides 24/7/365 access to urgent and non-urgent medical and mental health care, at no additional cost to students.

## Who to Contact if you are Concerned About a Student

Being a member of the Middlebury College community means forging strong relationships with students. While much of our daily work is focused on student growth and creating opportunities for rich learning experiences, there are times when we may become aware of student struggles or witness behaviors that cause us to be concerned. Should this happen, it is important for you to know who to reach out to so that the student/s get the support they need. What follows is guidance on how to reach out if you have any type of concern about the well-being of a student.

Imminent harm (911). If you are concerned about the immediate health or safety of a student, or any member of our campus community, dial 911.

Time Sensitive Concern (802-443-5911). If you are concerned about the well-being of a student and think that it is important for professional staff in Student Affairs or Public Safety to check in with that student quickly, please call Public Safety at 802-443-5911. Depending on the nature of the concern, a professional staff member in Residence Life, Student Life, Public Safety, or a combination thereof, will respond. **Please do not share your concern in an email.** Not only are emails not considered confidential, but we cannot ensure that emails will be read in a timely manner. We can ensure that calls to Public Safety will be answered and addressed 24/7.

Threat Assessment and Management Team (802-443-5911). At Middlebury College, we have a Threat Assessment and Management Team (TAM)—a group of trained professionals who are able to receive, analyze, and respond sensitively to reports of potential violence. Please do not hesitate to share information with this group if you have any concerns. If you are wrong, no harm is done. But if you are right, you could avert a tragedy. Violence prevention depends on all of us.

If you believe that an individual on campus has committed or may commit an act of violence, is engaging in behavior or making statements that raise concern about the potential for violence, or otherwise poses a threat to the health or safety of any member of the Middlebury College community, call Public Safety at 802-443-5911.

In the event of an imminent or unfolding emergency, dial 911 immediately.

Follow up is needed, but it is not an emergency (Public Facing CARE Form).

Student Life at Middlebury College utilizes an online software system called Advocate to assist with identifying students who may be in need of additional support, ensure that student concerns are followed through to completion and serve as a repository for student records. Instead of reaching out to Student Life Deans via phone or email when you have a concern about a student, we ask that you instead go to the Online CARE Report in Advocate

- <https://go.middlebury.edu/care>
- go/care
- [https://middlebury-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report/index.php/pid748362?](https://middlebury-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid748362?)

to request follow up. By utilizing this system, we are better able to ensure that concerns are addressed in a timely manner and that the most appropriate person is assigned to follow up with the student. Student Life Deans are always available to consult with faculty and staff, but we ask that concerns that require student follow-up come through as a [CARE Report](#).

To submit a [CARE Report](#), begin by selecting your role at the college (staff, faculty, student). Once you indicate that you are “faculty”, select “General Student Concern” under “Report Type” and then continue filling in the remainder of the form. Red asterisks indicate required fields, but not all fields are required.

Examples of what to report (may be observed visually, verbally or in written form):

- Increases in anxiety, worry, fear or feelings of being overwhelmed
  - Excessive fear of public places (outside of “stay home” advice)
  - Paralyzing fear about the future
- Increase in potential mental health symptoms
  - Changes in engagement
    - Isolating/withdrawing from others
    - Not “showing up” for class
    - Missing assignment deadlines
    - Unusual talkativeness
    - Decrease in engagement/talkativeness from what is ‘normal’ for them
    - Racing thoughts, hard to follow
    - Distractibility

- Changes in affect
  - Feelings of hopelessness
  - Excessive crying
  - Increased energy
  - Abnormally upbeat, jumpy or wired
  - Increased activity, energy or agitation
  - Exaggerated sense of well-being and self-confidence (euphoria)
  - Decreased/increased need for sleep
  - Decreased ability to focus or concentrate
- Decrease in academic/work performance
  - Missing assignments
  - Poor attendance
- Decrease in self-care/hygiene
  - Changes from previous level
  - Not sleeping
- Unhealthy coping strategies
  - Increase in alcohol or drug use
  - Increase in risky/impulsive behaviors
- Disruptive behaviors
  - Sudden anger
  - Noticeable changes in personality

**Important! Please avoid labeling students with mental health issues (e.g., is depressed, acting manic, etc.). Instead, stick with concrete behaviors (e.g., crying in class, speaking rapidly, and jumping from topic to topic).**

You will receive a confirmation email once your concern has been processed. In some instances, we may follow up asking for additional information. In other instances, we may not be able to follow up with you due to student privacy concerns. In all instances, we will assign a member of our team to follow up with the student.

Those of us in Student Affairs find it helpful when connecting with a student who is struggling to be able to say why we are reaching out and to let them know we are reaching out because a member of our community cares about them. We prefer to let the student know who the concern came from so that the student does not begin to worry that others are judging them. Before, or shortly after, submitting a CARE Report, consider letting the student know you are about to reach out to your colleagues in Student Affairs on their behalf. An example of what



you might say is “I am noticing that you look tired in class and that you seem to be having trouble sustaining your attention. Is there anything you would like to share with me, or is there something you think I might be able to help with? I also want to let you know that I am planning on reaching out to my colleagues in Student Affairs to share this concern as I realize I may not be the best person to help you address what is going on. I am doing this because it is important to me that you have what you need to be successful and happy here at Middlebury.” You may even find during this conversation that it makes sense to direct the student to campus resources. If so, please include what those resources are in the online CARE Report.

## Course Warnings

Course warnings are an integral component in our system for supporting student success at Middlebury College. Students should be placed on "warning" if they are currently earning a grade of "D" or "F," or if it is suspected that a student's continued performance may result in a final grade of "D" or "F." Course warnings are most effective when they are issued early enough in the semester for the student to connect with supports and take corrective action. Students may not have viable options for taking corrective measures when course warnings are issued once a student is no longer able to achieve a grade of "C-" or higher or after the drop period has ended.

To issue a course warning

- Go to the course hub site <http://courses.middlebury.edu/>
- Log on via "My Semester Dashboard" on the left of the page.
- Under the name of the course in question, click roster which will bring up every student in the course with their Student Life Dean listed
- Select the course warning option
- You will then be directed to copy-paste the message body (and possibly the subject and To/CC addresses) into an email.

The information you provide in the course warning form will be emailed to the student, the student's academic advisor, and the Directors of the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research (CTLR) along with an invitation to meet from their Student Life Dean. Students also receive follow-up information and outreach from the CTLR.

Although the word "warning" may feel harsh, remember that you control the narrative in your email message. Students do best when feedback is focused on concrete behaviors (e.g., "you missed 2 out of the last 4 quiz sections" vs. "you don't seem very engaged") and is coupled with viable steps for getting back on track (e.g., "let's set up an appointment to meet and discuss how you can make-up the work you missed. I would like to see you turn in a version of the discussion section activity no later than a week from today"). These narratives are also great opportunities to direct students toward course specific resources (e.g., "I find that students often benefit from setting up weekly appointments with peer tutors in the writing center. I encourage you to set up an appointment and bring the instructions for our first writing assignment with you. I have enjoyed hearing the perspective you share in class and look forward to reading your continued analysis in the paper that is due on October 12th."

Many students who receive course warnings dramatically improve their performance in the class in which they have received the course warning. In addition to inviting the student to

connect with you, these warnings often begin a conversation with their Student Life Dean in which the Dean 1) discusses the matter with the student, 2) informs the student of Learning Resources, 3) provides the student information about other types of available resources, and 4) invites the student in for further follow-up. For students who receive more than one warning in two or more subjects, the dean also notifies the parents or guardians. An official course warning and a meeting with a dean have proven to be successful combinations in helping students improve their performance.

Creating low stakes assignments and evaluations early in the semester is a way to give students early feedback about their performance in your class. Structuring your course in this way allows students to modify their approach and take corrective measures if their performance is not meeting their expectations. For students who continue to struggle, this allows instructors to issue course warnings early in the semester. Remember, students are taking 3-5 classes a semester, and are not always mindful of how work can pile up. Student Life Deans want to make sure that students are connected to the resources that will allow them to be successful in all of their courses, or to be able to explain options such as dropping a course or withdrawing from the college without classes appearing on their transcript before the deadlines for these options have passed.

## Issuing a Grade of “Incomplete”

Faculty are required to consult with Student Life Deans prior to issuing a grade of INC (incomplete) for a student. This collaboration is necessary to ensure equity in the process and adherence to college policy. Incompletes are issued only in unanticipated, exceptional circumstances that arise near the end of the term and when a student has been meeting the majority of course expectations.

Once it is determined that a Student Life Dean supports a grade of incomplete, the professor and the Student Life Dean collaborate to create an Incomplete Contract.

The information that comprises the Incomplete Contract is entered by the course instructor of record directly into an online CARE Report in Advocate

- <https://go.middlebury.edu/care>
- go/care
- [https://middlebury-advocate.symplcity.com/care\\_report/index.php/pid748362?](https://middlebury-advocate.symplcity.com/care_report/index.php/pid748362?)

Once at this form, the course instructor selects “Faculty” under **Affiliation with Middlebury** and “Incomplete” under **Faculty Report Type**. The following information will then need to be entered into the form.

- **Student Name**
- **Student ID**
- **Student Life Dean**
- **Graduation Term** It is okay to leave this blank. However, please note that students cannot graduate with any INC grades on their transcripts. INC must be resolved before final grades are due for graduating seniors.
- **Course Code & Section**
- **CRN**
- **Term & Year of course**
- **Name of professor requesting incomplete**
- **Provisional letter grade.** This is the grade the student would receive if ze was issued a grade at this time. This is not the grade that you anticipate the student receiving if ze turns in all outstanding work.
- **Student due date.** This is the date by which the student needs to submit all outstanding work which will ordinarily be before the deadline for adding classes in the following Fall or Spring semester. The deadline may be no later than the deadline to drop classes in the following semester. Incompletes in winter term courses will follow the same procedures: the deadline for the submission of all remaining work may be no later than the deadline to drop classes in the Spring semester.
- **Submit grades by.** This is the date by which the faculty member is agreeing to submit a grade for the student. If no grade is submitted by this date, the grade will be recorded as the “Provisional Letter Grade” entered above.

- **Outstanding work and completion plan.** Please enter the work that you are agreeing to accept and the specific dates, if applicable, that the work needs to be turned in by. This completion plan is an important component of a student's ability to successfully resolve an incomplete as well as a required piece of record keeping for the Registrar.

Once the Student Life Dean receives this information, ze will either reach out with questions or use the information submitted to generate a finalized Incomplete Contract. This Incomplete Contract will be shared with the course instructor of record, the student, and the Office of the Registrar.

If you have any questions about this form, please contact [sldeansoffice@middlebury.edu](mailto:sldeansoffice@middlebury.edu).

To resolve a grade of INC please submit the new grade using this online form:  
<http://www.middlebury.edu/offices/academic/records/Forms/facforms>

## 5th Course Requests

The decision to take 5 classes should not be taken lightly by students. Even high-performing students can struggle under this increased course load. Therefore, it is important for students to have conversations with multiple advisors before moving forward with this request.

The role of the Faculty Advisor. The first person that a student should reach out to is hir Faculty Advisor. The Faculty Advisor can help the student assess hir actual need for taking 5 courses and discuss some of the implications of the increased course load on hir ability to perform up to hir personal standard in the remaining 4 courses as well as hir ability to engage in important co-curricular activities and opportunities. If the Academic Advisor and student agree that it is academically necessary to take a 5th course and that there are no concerns about negative impacts on the student's performance in hir remaining courses, the next person the student should consult is the instructor of the 5th course that the student is requesting to add.

- The Faculty Advisor should email confirmation of hir support to the student. The student will need to upload a pdf of this email into hir application to take 5 courses.

The role of the 5th Course Instructor. The instructor of the 5th course should share with the student whether ze thinks that a student could reasonably succeed in the proposed 5th course given that the student will be taking 4 other courses. It may also prove helpful for the professor to discuss important points in the semester for the student to assess how well ze is keeping up with the course material and requirements so the student can make timely adjustments to hir schedule if needed.

- The instructor will need to confirm hir approval in an email to the student making the request. The student will need to upload a pdf of this email into hir application to take 5 courses.
- The instructor will also need to add an approval in Banner for the course to be added.

The role of the Student Life Dean. The last person that the student should reach out to is hir Student Life Dean. There are several things that the Student Life Dean must take into consideration while evaluating a student's application to take 5 classes. To be eligible for consideration, students must:

- be of Sophomore or Junior standing
  - First year students are not eligible
  - Seniors need only faculty approval for a fifth course, entered in BannerWeb
  - have at least a 3.2 GPA in their two preceding semesters

- demonstrate that they can handle the increased workload

Students who meet the above criteria will need to submit an online CARE Report in Advocate

- <https://go.middlebury.edu/care>
- go/care
- [https://middlebury-advocate.symplicity.com/care\\_report/index.php/pid748362?](https://middlebury-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid748362?)

to request to take a 5th course from their Student Life Dean. Once at the form, the student will need to

- Select the role of “student” in the first drop-down menu **Affiliation with Middlebury.**
- Select “Request to add 5th course” in the second drop-down menu **Student Report Type.**
- Fill in the rest of the form and upload their Faculty Advisor and Course Instructor letters of approval

Only complete applications will be considered. Once the decision has been made, students will receive an email with an Approval or Denial of the request.

After students have received this approval, they will be added to the course by the Registrar. It is important students monitor their email for outreach from the Registrar in the event there are barriers to their request.

Students and faculty may email [slideansoffice@middlebury.edu](mailto:slideansoffice@middlebury.edu) if they have any questions about this process. Once again, keep in mind, 5th courses can be added during the add period, which is separate from normal registration. Students may work towards prior approval by submitting this application, but they cannot be officially added until later.

Follow up. Before the end of the drop period, Student Life Deans reach out to students who are enrolled in 5 classes to check in and to see if they are having difficulty keeping up with their workload. Another helpful intervention for students who are struggling with an increased workload is the issuance of a [Course Warning](#).

## The Honor Code and Academic Integrity at Middlebury

Faculty members have a number of different roles to play in supporting Middlebury's Honor Code. These include teaching students appropriate citation practices for the many different fields reflected in our curriculum; helping them to understand and embrace the value of intellectual integrity and the language of scholarship; clarifying for students their expectations in their own classes; apprising students of important resources for citation styles and practices; and holding students accountable for violations.

The College takes the Honor Code seriously. Before students enter Middlebury College, they are required to sign a document stating that they have read the code and understand it, and they are given a multi-step orientation to the Honor Code upon their arrival. Middlebury believes that student adherence to the Honor Code is a shared responsibility: it is the responsibility of the faculty to provide clear instructions in their syllabi on preferred citation practices and on their expectations for each assignment regarding independent or collaborative work, and access to sources; it is the responsibility of the students to seek clarification from their professors if they are unclear on any of these elements.

Students are expected to sign the honor pledge—"I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment"—on all written work submitted.

You should also be aware that any exams that you give must be unproctored. After passing out the exam and answering questions about it, you should leave the room. However, the Dean of the Faculty may grant an instructor permission to proctor an examination in his or her course when the instructor has communicated to the dean of the College that she or he has a concern that students will cheat in examinations in the course. Authorization will apply to the remainder of the semester.

We strongly advise faculty to discuss the issue of **plagiarism** in all classes that involve writing papers, so that students are familiar with your expectations regarding their use of secondary sources, if any, and the way in which sources are appropriately documented in your field. As noted above, you should also be clear about what level of collaboration among students, if any, is desired or acceptable in their completion of homework assignments. Please remind students that **duplicate use of written work** is also a violation of the Honor Code.

The [Academic Honesty](#) section of the Middlebury Handbook spells out the particulars of the Honor Code. If you have any questions about the Honor Code that your departmental



colleagues cannot answer, please contact Associate Dean for Community Standards, Brian Lind. ([blind@middlebury.edu](mailto:blind@middlebury.edu))

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What are some recommended best practices for helping students to understand academic integrity?**

Students respond positively when professors take time to discuss not only the logistics of their assignments in relation to the honor code, but broader issues of academic integrity in the context of their field and of their class. Although some professors do this at the beginning of the semester, others reinforce this theme by finding ways to integrate it throughout the class.

It is helpful to include in your syllabus specific instructions on what kind of assistance is and is not permitted. Issues to consider include sharing group-generated data; proof-reading by native speakers in language courses; parental collaboration; use of tutors, etc. It is additionally helpful to include in your syllabus a clear policy on late assignment submissions.

### **How do I make a distinction between a few sloppy citations and a case of plagiarism requiring a report?**

There is no formula or guideline for making this distinction. In cases where you find yourself in this kind of gray area, it's helpful to contact the Community Standards office. Together you can review the situation and a member of the office will be able to provide some broader institutional context for how cases like this have been handled in the past.

### **What happens if I think I have a case of cheating or plagiarism?**

Contact the Community Standards Office by calling 802-443-5385 or emailing [blind@middlebury.edu](mailto:blind@middlebury.edu). You'll talk through your situation and determine if there is enough evidence to move forward. When moving forward, the professor notifies the student that because of concerns about a possible Honor Code violation, they have referred the case to Community Standards. The professor then provides the judicial affairs officer with a statement describing the cause for concern, as well as any supporting documents, such as original source materials and syllabi.

### **Do all reports of Honor Code violations result in a hearing?**

No. When students accept responsibility for violating the Honor Code at the outset, it is possible to resolve the case through the Deans Disposition option, through which the community standards officer assigns a sanction. This is done in close consultation with the

professor, as sanctions usually include failure of the assignment or failure of the class, as well as a reprimand or short-term suspension of some kind.

When students contest the charges, or when there are multiple students involved, the case is generally referred to the Judicial Board, which includes students, faculty, and staff.

## Administration Committee Petitions

The [Administration Committee](#) hears requests from students and faculty for exceptions to certain academic policies. All complete Administration Committee petitions should be accompanied by an [Administration Committee Petition Cover Sheet](#).

When preparing your petition, please be specific in outlining the details of the request, including signing and dating the petition using the following format:

- Paragraph 1: Clearly state your request.
- Paragraph 2: Give a brief explanation as to why the request is being made.
- Paragraph 3: Reference any accompanying documents. To see which documents are required for your petition, please see the Petition Cover Form and the information below.

### Grade Change

Students who wish to pursue grade changes must meet with their professor. It is the professor who submits a grade change request, not the student. Grade change forms to be filled out by the professor and department head/chair can be found on the Registrar's website under [Forms for Faculty](#). It is important to note that grade changes are not always granted by the Administration Committee, even with support from the professor. More information about the grade change process can be found in the Handbook under [Academics: Grades and Transcripts](#).

Any request for a grade change submitted by a professor must be accompanied by a letter of endorsement from the department chair. Changes will be made only in cases of clerical error or for the reason of fairness to a student. A petition to change a student's final grade should not be used as a substitute for [issuing a grade of Incomplete](#).

To submit a petition to the Administration Committee

- Go to the Online CARE Report: [Online CARE Report | Middlebury Advocate System \(symplicity.com\)](#) ; go/care
- Select "Faculty" under *Affiliation with Middlebury*
- Select "Administrative Committee Petition" under *Faculty Report Type*
- Fill out your contact information, student information and information about the course
- Upload your petition letter and any supporting documents to the *Verification and Documents* field.

Questions about the Administration Committee process or what qualifies as a “clerical error” or “reasons of fairness to students” should be directed to the co-chairs of the Administrative Committee prior to submitting a petition for a grade change.

The 2021-2022 Administration Committee is co-chaired by Professor Vickie Backus and Professor Timothy Billings. Additional members, both voting and non-voting, include the following:

- Professor Marta Manrique-Gomez
- Professor Jonathan Miller-Lane
- Dean of Students Derek Doucet
- Registrar Jennifer Thompson
- Associate Registrar Claire Wilkinson
- Operations Coordinator, Michelle Davis

## Dean's Excuses

Excused Absences granted by Student Life Deans (otherwise known as Dean's Excuses) are intended to support students through **substantial obstacles** while providing input to faculty that is in line with an official, equitable, and consistent process for assessing student concerns. A Dean's Excuse is essentially an official note from a Student Life Dean indicating a student's circumstance warrants giving special consideration to how that student is graded when it comes to an absence(s), or to an extension on an assignment.

Dean's excuses are given for extenuating circumstances such as

- Non-elective surgeries, emergency room visits, or hospitalizations
- Significant mental illness or other medical diagnoses significantly affecting a student's capacity or ability to participate in their academic life
- Bereavement
- Reports of sexual misconduct, dating misconduct, domestic violence, or stalking (SMDVS)
- Other family emergencies (e.g., fire, flood, terminal illness)
- Observance of religious holidays and/or practices (e.g., fasting)

When Student Life Deans are working with students in these circumstances, they will often reach out to faculty member(s) to let them know that a student has missed or will miss class on specific date(s). Sometimes the student may be instructed by their Student Life Dean to write the faculty member(s) and copy the Dean on the email indicating that a Dean's Excuse is being offered for an absence. The Dean will then reply to confirm the excuse. Sometimes the Student Life Dean or student will ask faculty if it is acceptable for the student to hand in work later because of the situation. Keep in mind, Deans are attempting to support and coach students for the world after college, so they want to empower and assist students with learning how to communicate for themselves as appropriate. Deans, ideally, are not doing everything **for** students.

Dean's Excuses may have varying levels of detail about the circumstances that precipitated the excuse based on the nature of the situation and/or a student's request for privacy. All students who are granted excuses are encouraged to communicate directly with their faculty to share, as they are able/interested, and to negotiate the particulars of any requested accommodations or changes to course expectations.

### Differentiations from other absences

Because Dean's Excuses are reserved for only the most emergent circumstances, there are many examples when students have valid explanations/reasons for missing class (e.g., athletics, conference presentation, job interviews for seniors, etc.) which do not meet the criteria for a Dean's Excuse. Communicating such "explained absences" to faculty members is the responsibility of individual students. Ultimately, explained absences are simply that—explainable reasons to miss class—and it's up to faculty to work with students as to what happens and how grades will be affected or calculated. Please see the handbook section for absences for athletic events.

Similarly, absences due to short-term common illnesses (such as COVID-19 "breakthrough cases" that are not severe, stomach bugs, the flu and the flu-like symptoms) do not meet the criteria for Dean's Excuses. Everyone, including faculty and staff, periodically needs to miss class/work for such circumstances. Even if students are sick with a fever or have a "note" from a medical provider to rest, **common illnesses do not warrant a Dean's Excuse, nor does a Dean need to determine if the absence is valid (or not).**

If you have concerns about a student's academic progress related to absences unassociated with a Dean's Excuse, you can create a CARE Report for a [General Student Concern](#) or issue a [Course Warning](#), as appropriate.

Please make sure your syllabi reflect your expectations and policy for dealing with excused and unexcused absences outside of Dean's Excuses. Additionally, please do not include language on your syllabus that states that the only excused absences are those that are accompanied by a Dean's Excuse. Not only is this an unrealistic expectation, but we do not want to encourage or unintentionally coerce students to attend class when they have a fever or are exhibiting flu-like symptoms.

## Request to Change Final Exam Time

Students are only allowed to change the time of their final exam if given explicit permission to do so by their Student Life Dean. Student Life Deans are only able to grant permission for the following circumstances

1. Two or more final exams scheduled at the same time
2. Three or more exams scheduled in a 24-hour period
3. Emergencies or unusual and compelling circumstances beyond student control
  - a. With attached documentation

Permission is never granted based on conflicts with travel plans.

Students wishing to petition to change the time of a final exam should be directed to the [FAQ section of the Student Life Dean](#) webpage for instructions.

Faculty who would like to exhibit greater flexibility in administering their final exams outside of students petitioning their Student Life Dean should consult their Department Chair or the Center for Teaching, Learning and Research for guidance.